LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of Labour Unity
Founded 1921
Editor: R. Palme Dutt

What Next?	*	John Gollan
Illegality of Nuclear Weapons	*	D. N. Pritt, Q.C.
Trade Union Problems	*	Frank Haxell
The American Scene	*	John Williamson
The People at Large	*	Sancho Panza
Reminiscences of Lenin	*	Elena Stassova
An Artist in Korea	*	Paul Hogarth
Old China	*	R. Page Arnot

July, 1955

One shilling and sixpence

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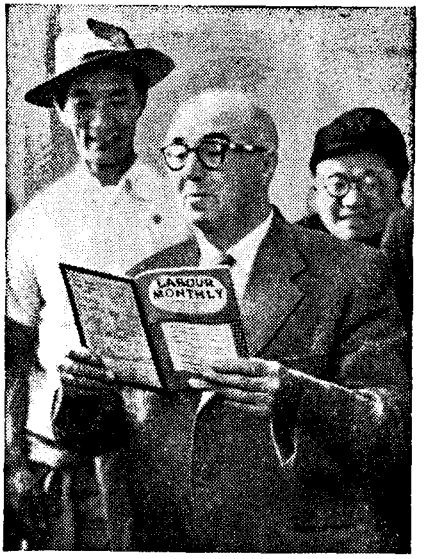
THERE AND BACK AGAIN

NO MATTER what part of the world you may visit, you will find LABOUR MONTHLY—and its readers. In this picture you will see a British boiler-maker finding the February L.M. in the Library of the Institute of National Minorities in Peking, with two of his six hundred million hosts looking on smiling. A few thousand miles further on, the same number was being read in Canada by another Lancastrian who, like Harry Pollitt, also started his working life in a British cotton mill. Keeping in touch with events in Britain, he notes that 'the textile industry is still in tough shape, from putting the conservatives in to run their business for them'. Move on a thousand miles to meet another Canadian. He describes the extensive use he made of quotations from L.M. in writing to Canadian M.P.'s to press them for a 'fight against German rearmament and for better friendly relations with the U.S.S.R.' Drop over the border and be greeted by American teachers 'unemployed because we won't sign conformity oaths'. They find L.M. 'an inspiration—brilliant, clarifying and just'; they even manage to spare a donation. On again to the Middle West and find the 75-year-old retired factory worker, who subscribes to L.M. because he likes 'to read what peoples of other lands think of what the U.S.A. is doing now, all over the world. And I like to read letters that come to your office from other lands'. Those letters come from readers in the Middle East, in Africa, Iceland, India, Pakistan; far away New Zealanders, who long for a 'feather-weight airmail edition, because it takes so long to reach us by sea. Still, you may be assured we read it from cover to cover, and I am sure that what we read is reflected



Mr. Harry Pollitt, in the Library of the Institute of National Minorities, during his recent visit to Peking.

in our conversation and action'. Why this world-wide link-up, East to West, this warm and friendly co-existence? An Australian reader puts it briefly; for he ranks our magazine among the 'great efforts to help mankind build a society free from capitalism and war'.

Perhaps some people overseas have a picture of us British as being concerned with our 'own' problems, lacking interest in what goes on elsewhere? But not our readers! It was, for example, a Scottish railwayman who wrote last week in warmest praise of Diego Rivera's 'really excellent drawing' in the June issue, which was such a powerful protest against the forces oppressing the people of Guatemala. It is from Cardiff dockland that there comes a regular donation, in memory of 'a staunch fighter for the rights of the common people of Malta', arrested

(Continued on page iii of cover)

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Vol. XXXVI, No. 7

CONTENTS

July, 1955

	Page
NOTES OF THE MONTH: What Next? by John Gollan	289
ILLEGALITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, by D. N. Pritt, Q.C.	301
TRADE UNION PROBLEMS, by Frank Haxell	309
THE AMERICAN SCENE, by John Williamson	315
THE PEOPLE AT LARGE, by Sancho Panza	319
REMINISCENCES OF LENIN, by Elena Stassova	323
AN ARTIST IN KOREA, by Paul Hogarth	326
OLD CHINA, by R. Page Arnot	329
DRAWINGS OF KOREA, by Paul Hogarth	312-313
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO	336
Book Reviews:	
The Fisherman's Son, by Vilis Lacis: *Hugh MacDiarmid*	334
Diary of a Schoolteacher, by F. Vigdorova: *M. D. Clarke*	335
Moment of Choice, by Jack Lindsay: *Doris Lessing*	335
Shorter Notices:	
The Right to Live, by Ralph Millner	336
Some Aspects of Indian Population, by V. B. Singh	336

Notes of the Month

What Next?

JOHN GOLLAN*

'Overshadowing all else in the Year 1954 has been the emergence of the thermo-nuclear bomb. . . . New and revolutionary problems are posed requiring courage and imagination for their solution.' (Statement on Defence, 1955.)

'The Labour Party will not make this momentous question, the greatest threat to this nation and to the nations of this world, the plaything of politics.' (Herbert Morrison, Lewisham, May 23, 1955.)

'There has been a steady refusal to face the really difficult issues. . . . If there has seemed to be no great issues between the parties this is largely the cause.' (The Times, May 25, 1955.)

THE most serious issues confront the Labour movement as a result of the Tory victory in the General Election. Returned this time on a majority vote, the Tory Government, it is clear,

*The editor will resume the Notes of the Month in the August issue.

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will aim to hold on for the full five years; and will try to use its power for an offensive against the working class and the nation. The sharpest class battles are opening up. The declaration of emergency powers against the striking locomotivemen is the symbol of Tory intent.

In international affairs a decisive stage has been reached. The dangers and opportunities in recent developments are equally obvious. The Big Four talks will mark a crucial point in these developments. Yet at this moment the Tories are back in the saddle. There was never a time when they could be less trusted with Britain's affairs. As the danger mounts the struggle for peace sharpens also.

The right wing Labour leaders talk now of five years of Parliamentary opposition—which would be in fact toleration and barely concealed support of the Tory Government. The real issue, the supreme need after the election is to rally the movement and the people for a new policy of peace and social advance and the strongest united fight which will guarantee that this Tory Government is driven out of office. For this the lessons of the election must be examined and mastered. The crisis of policy in the Labour movement is deepened as a result of the election and its solution made even more compelling and urgent if the movement is to advance as it must.

The Price

The election result is an even greater condemnation of official Labour policy than that of 1951. Right wing Labour in 'opposition' has been proved even more disastrous and bankrupt than when in office. All the objective conditions existed for a Tory defeat. The results show this in spite of the spineless defeatist official Labour campaign. Instead of winning votes the Tories lost nearly 500,000, although they won the election. Their total vote dropped to 13.3 millions.

> The much-calculated 'swing' never materialised. . . . It is impossible to establish by figures that any electors who voted Labour in 1951 swung over to the Conservatives this time. (The *Economist*, June 4, 1955.)

Yet, despite this, Labour lost the election, dropping one and a half million votes, the first drop in the Labour vote since 1931. Eden could boast that for the first time in a century a British Government in power actually gained seats in an election at the expense of the opposition. This is the disgrace achieved by the Labour Party under the right wing leadership.

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The full enormity of the crime should be grasped. Here is the classic example of Social Democracy's disruptive disorganising rôle in paving the way back to Tory victory. 1945 was a great political advance of the masses arising out of the anti-fascist war. But the weakness of this political advance was that it expressed itself in a right wing dominated Labour Government. Labour's huge parliamentary majority was based on 12 million votes to the 10 million gained by the Tories. A situation was created where, given a radical socialist policy, the defeated, dispirited Tories could have been further isolated and their bloc of 10 million votes broken open forever. This is precisely what right wing Labour could not do and had no intention of doing. Its policy was imperialism abroad and administration of capitalism at home. The result was a Tory gain of two and a half million votes in 1950 and a further one and a half million and the Government in 1951. Even then, however, the Labour vote was increasing as the people struggled against Toryism, rising to 13.3 million in 1950 and 13.9 million in 1951, the Tory Government being elected on a minority vote. The possibilities existed for smashing the Tory come-back given a change in policy and leadership. During the three and a half years of Tory Government, however, the right wing leaders in 'opposition' moved closer than ever to the Tories with a virtual identity of policy on German rearmament, the H-bomb, the wage freeze, opposition to strikes, etc., bringing about an ever-increasing revolt in the Labour movement against official policy.

Identity of Policy

The stage was reached in the six months preceding the election when *The Times* commenting on the issues for the coming battle could write:

> The Labour opposition . . . is committed . . . to policies which, except in detail, do not effectively differ from those of the Government. (October 19, 1954.)

A Gallup Poll in December showed that 39 per cent. of the electors saw no real important differences between Tory and Labour official policy. In spite of the imminent election, the real concern of the official Labour leadership was not the preparation to defeat the Tories but the fratricidal campaign to smash and expel the left whatever the cost in disruption to the Labour movement and consequent advantages to the Tories. The mounting opposition to the suicidal right wing policies reached its highest point in the

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challenge to German rearmament—at the Scarborough Conference, the great Parliamentary Lobby of January 25 and the ever-increasing votes against the official policy in the Parliamentary Labour Party. It was accompanied by a rising industrial movement and strikes against the employers to an extent not seen for years.

Sharp Contrasts

On the eve of the election, the sharp contrasts in the situation stood out. There was the virtual identity of Toryism and official Labour policy on all major issues giving rise to frustration and cynicism among sections of the electors. On the industrial and political field, on the other hand, in the trade unions and the constituency parties, there was a great advance of the widest sections demanding a change. While the Tories were switching from Churchill to Eden in preparation for the electoral struggle, the right wing eight weeks before polling day, were devoting their entire attention to the attempt to expel Bevan. This was how the right 'prepared' for the election. They paved the way to the Tory victory.

This was how the all-out united mobilisation of the working class needed to defeat the Tories and win a new policy was prevented. It was this identity of policy which stamped the character of the official election campaign and despite the splendid fight of the Communist Party, individual Labour M.P.s, trade union and factory organisations, resulted in one and a half million Labour abstentions.

Election Without an Issue?

This is an election without an issue, wrote *The Times* at the beginning of the campaign. Three days before polling day, the *Manchester Guardian* could write 'The golden days may yet return when parties find something substantial to differ about'. All the cynical leader writers meant, of course, was that there was no real point at issue between the official policies of the two Parties in the press and in speeches, on the radio and television. The real issues were excluded from the B.B.C. which denied facilities to the Communist Party and even to Labour M.P.s in opposition to official policy. Thus capitalist democracy works.

In fact never were the issues in any election so great or so grave. The supreme issue of all time was there. It was put in the Communist Party election manifesto which said:

> The great issue of this General Election is whether there is to be peace or a world war waged with atom and hydrogen bombs.

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But because of their complicity in Tory foreign policy and the manufacture of the bomb, the front bench could not make this the issue. To do so would have meant to struggle for a real alternative policy, real Four Power negotiations, no German rearmament, an end to war blocs, a peaceful united Germany, a genuine policy of disarmament. On the contrary official Labour emerged as the strongest supporter of the H-bomb. In Willesden East the Labour candidate, Maurice Orbach, dared to oppose the bomb. His Tory opponent approached Attlee and Attlee denounced the Labour candidate. Morrison broadcast of the danger of allowing 'the Russians to believe that we shall never use the bomb unless they use it first'. Little wonder then that Eden hardly made a speech without reminding his audience that Tory foreign policy was backed by the Labour leaders. And Churchill making reference to Attlee's support of Government policy pointed out that he could hardly do otherwise as Labour had initiated that policy. 'I have no doubt he wishes to do the right thing' patronisingly added Churchill. 'His real struggle is less with the Tories than with his own left-wing followers.'

Eden's Election Stunt

The result was that when Eden perpetrated the great election stunt around the Four Power talks, official Labour was silent, made no protest or exposure. American comment on the election manœuvre involved was cynical and open. The London correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune* (May 11) wrote of the suspicions 'that Sir Anthony and Foreign Secretary Harold Macmillan had frightened American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and President Eisenhower with the thought that the Conservatives might lose the election unless they helped call for a top level meeting at this time'. Yet when *Pravda,* in a powerful editorial, denounced Eden's use of this vital question for electoral purposes, it was Sir Hartley Shawcross who denounced *Pravda* for daring to impute such methods to the Tories. 'Sir Hartley Defends the Conservatives' ran the *Manchester Guardian* headline. Shades of Baldwin and the election lie of 1935!

But Eden's decision on Four Power talks reflected the incessant popular pressure for negotiations as well as the desire to win electoral advantage. It also reflected the increasing contradictions and difficulties of the Western war policy and the need to counter the expanding peace initiative of the Soviet Union over disarmament and the Austrian treaty and the policy of People's China at the

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Bandung Conference. The very fact, however, that Eden saw in this step a powerful electoral advantage showed how peace was the real issue of the election forcing its way to the fore, forcing the Party leaders to pay it lip service. But official Labour in basic agreement with the Tories on foreign policy could not grasp this, the issue of the election.

Labour's Farewell to Social Reform

It was exactly the same on home affairs. No one could deny that the cost of living was an issue. But for the right wing Labour leaders it was one which rebounded back on them. They accused the Tories of forcing up living costs. The Tories answered that under Labour rule prices went up too. Both were true. Neither had a programme for bringing prices down. Because the right wing leaders are tied to the war programme and the crippling level of war expenditure, their days of social reform programmes are over. Only the most modest proposals were advanced and these in vague general terms. And when Tory spokesmen produced (completely false) figures of costs, Gaitskell's defence was to denounce as a big lie any suggestion that Labour's programme would cost much. Not only would it cost little, he indignantly denied, but it would be spread over five years and with education even longer. It was practical, flexible and in no way extravagant, was his plea. In fact the programme would cost little because it *was* little.

For the real poverty of the old age pensioners or the burdens of the lower paid, there was even less to offer. There was no pledge to repeal the Tory Rent Act. Workers engaged in strike struggle to wring out of the exorbitant profits of the employers some advance on wages were looked on as an embarrassment. They were denounced in terms as shrill, vicious and menacing as those of any Tory. The few feeble proposals for nationalisation in Labour's programme were never mentioned while the Tories maintained an incessant barrage against nationalisation. With less and less to choose between the official policies, the Labour leaders were reduced to vague meaningless generalities in explaining the difference between them and the Tories. An eve of poll article by Morgan Phillips in the *Daily Herald* boldly titled 'What this Election is about' concluded:

> There is a basic difference between the two Parties in the manner of approach to the problems of the world today. Labour's policy meets the

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needs of the future. The Tory approach is half-hearted and slow-conditioned to suit an age which is passed. That is the issue.

In other words for the right wing there was no issue, only a difference of approach.

The Real Fight

The sham fight at the top made the electoral struggle of the Communist Party doubly significant. Here was the real challenge to Toryism, the real alternative programme. Faced with great difficulties because of the policy of the right wing Labour leaders, denied access to the radio and television, restricted by the electoral laws in putting its case fully in the constituencies where it was not contesting, the Party nevertheless conducted a great campaign. 350,000 electors were canvassed, over 1,300 meetings held in the seventeen constituencies contested. There was a widespread welcome to the Party policy. The British electoral system puts the greatest difficulty before the Party in expressing its support in votes. Nevertheless, it is significant that in nine constituencies where comparison is possible with previous contests, the Communist vote went up.

The Party's campaign and especially the splendid struggle for the real alternative policy waged by the *Daily Worker* was an outstanding factor in the major working class centres generally. In contradistinction to the shadow-boxing at the top, the fight down below was waged by the active militants of the Labour movement, the shop stewards and active trade unionists in the factories, pits and depots. They brought out the real issues of the election, combating the defeatism spread by the right wing, rallying the workers against the Tories. And wherever there was a Labour candidate campaigning for the real alternative policy the fight was intensified. This was the real election fight. It did not succeed in preventing a Tory victory. But in spite of the defeatist campaign at the top and the millstone of official policy, the militant fight brought about the position that the Tory proportion of the total poll increased by less than 2 per cent. and their vote actually fell. This shows that had there been unity of all the left forces to compel a change in Labour policy the Tories would have been decisively defeated.

What Next?

The great debate on the future has started. This is no academic exercise. It is a matter of life and death. The political position in

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Britain sharpens as a result of the Election and with it the position inside the Labour Party. A crucial stage in the struggle for a new policy and the defeat of right wing influences and leadership in the Labour movement opens up. It is one which will coincide with a great development of the movement for peace and the defence of economic standards against the Tories and the capitalist class. It is a situation which urgently requires the broadest united movement for a new policy and the greatest mass activity to win that policy in struggle.

First and foremost is the struggle for peace, made doubly urgent by the nature and circumstances of the Big Four meeting in mid-July. The peace forces have been powerfully assisted in their task by the ceaseless peace initiative of the Soviet Union. The Austrian Treaty, the agreement with Yugoslavia and the decisions of the Warsaw Conference on mutual security show the new alternative positive peace path for Europe. Of the greatest importance is the invitation to the German Federal Republic to resume diplomatic relations, warning of the suicidal results of Western policy in using Germany as the spearhead of an anti-Soviet war. Its repercussions on public opinion in Western Germany already searching for an alternative to N.A.T.O. and rearmament will be enormous.

But the very intensity of the Soviet efforts underline the gravity of the war danger. For they arise out of the menace to peace caused by the ratification of the Paris agreements and the decisions of the N.A.T.O. Council meeting last December on the speeding up of the preparations for nuclear war.

Western Manœuvres

Western tactics regarding the coming Four Power talks are only too obvious and ominous. The U.S. State Department talks of attempts to revise the constitution of the People's Democracies, a proposal patently designed for wrecking, not for negotiation. Dulles discounts the possibility of agreement from the start with his propaganda that 'It might take months or years' to solve the issues. Eisenhower talks of the Four Power meeting as 'only a beginning' in a campaign 'which might last for a generation'. And the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent states 'The British view is that, at best, the meeting of the heads of Government should be the first in a continuing process of East-West negotiation which might continue over months and, if necessary, years'. The intention is clear, to drag out the talks while pressing ahead with the war preparations. This

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is the reason for the exceptional sharpness of the Soviet Note agreeing to the talks. It condemns the U.S. wrecking proposals. All this, it declares, can only discredit the very idea of a conference. It warns that the U.S. is proposing the conference on the one hand 'and on the other hand it is already now coming out with plans which deliberately doom the Four Power conference to failure'. And it concludes (for obviously agreement can only be achieved if all interested states are striving toward the end of genuinely relieving international tension) 'only in this case can the conference of the heads of the Governments yield positive results'. There could be no clearer and unmistakable warning of the need for a great campaign of public pressure if real negotiations are to take place. From this point of view the World Peace Congress at Helsinki could not have taken place at a more appropriate time.

The Right to Strike Threatened

Equally vital is the struggle on the home front. One of the most sinister aspects of the Tory election campaign was the ceaseless propaganda, only thinly disguised, against the right to strike. Now that the Tories are back in power the moves against the right to strike are proceeding apace and should arouse the alarm and spur on the action of every trade unionist. Eden's declaration of war on the railwaymen by emergency powers was followed by his statement, amounting to a typical employer's ultimatum, that even in the locomen's strike (an official strike) work must commence before negotiations could begin. The threat was in his broadcast on June 5, clear and unmistakable. 'The board will be ready to help in discussions the moment work begins again. But work must begin again.' No trade union worth its salt would agree to this doctrine, which would make the right to strike a farce. Attacked in Parliament on the issue, Eden's subsequent explanations have only made matters worse. In moving the address to the Queen's speech in the House of Lords, Lord Runciman condemned the strike as a 'brutal and indiscriminate weapon' and demanded another method of settling disputes. The intention is to impose limitations on the right to strike unless the movement rallies unhesitatingly to smash the attempt at birth and defend this right untrammelled. For this is what the Tories fear, the organised might of the working class used in action, the very antithesis of the traditional ineffective right wing Parliamentary opposition, the real menace to their continuance as a Government.

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They are reckoning without the will of the working class. The need is to use the full power of the movement to develop a counter offensive against the Tories and the employers for higher wages, the 40-hour week and an end to dependence on overtime to meet the rising living costs. For all this the widest unity and common action of all trade unionists is vital.

Which Way?

The way forward is bound up with the solution of the crisis in the Labour Party. The debate opens up. The issue is simple: further to the right, which means further Labour disruption with consolidation of Tory power? or to the left, the way of socialism and unity, the way of victory over the Tories? It is this battle of policy which is decisive. The conclusions being drawn by the right wing are obvious—further to the right, the continuation of the attack on the left, a 'united' party based on the capitulation of the left. All this emerges clearly in the declarations of Gaitskell and Morrison. It is a mistake, says Gaitskell, to say that Labour can only win an election when times are bad, policies and their presentation must be adapted to more prosperous times as well:

> This does not mean abandoning our faith in social equality and social justice—but it does mean expressing it in modern phrases which ring a bell instead of out-of-date slogans which make no impression today. (At the A.S.W. Conference, June 2.)

Morrison echoes Gaitskell with the demand for 'the expression of Party policies in the light of modern conditions'.

Alleged 'New Thinking'

But the need for alleged new thinking and modern phrases demanded by the right wing leadership was their conclusion after the 1951 defeat. It was 'new thinking' which produced 'Challenge to Labour', the manifesto for the defeat of 1955. The new thinking of the right wing is the betrayal of socialism, the path to further defeats. It is an effort to get the Labour movement to accept the Tory picture of prosperity, to portray the Tories as the new supporters of social advance, to enter into competition as to who are the best administrators of capitalism. The Tories were able to claim convincingly that things were better, complains Gaitskell, while the basis for this was laid by Labour. The Tories, says Attlee, have had to 'accept what we have done. They have had to accept the

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Welfare State'. The dilemma here seems to be to advance a Tory policy but to find words to make it look Labour to the rank and file.

Prosperity—for the Rich

What is this prosperity, which even the Tories are warning may collapse by the autumn? It is prosperity for the rich. Never were class contrasts so acute and exploitation so great. It is not only that the upper one per cent. of the population own 50 per cent. of the wealth and that for every ten who die millionaires, half a million die leaving virtually nothing. Twenty million people have incomes of from £3 to £10 a week, not including the four and a half million pensioners, living in poverty conditions. Wage rates barely keep pace with rising prices. The better paid workers only get their money by excessive overtime or arising out of methods of super-exploitation which means extra millions for the employer for every partial advance won by the workers. Not only is it an era of unprecedented profits but 4 per cent. of the companies take 83 per cent. of total company profits. And the Tories are preparing a new offensive on conditions, a new onslaught on social services. This is what the right wing want to perpetuate.

The real need is for a bold new socialist programme making a fundamental attack on profit, privilege and ownership of wealth, for a decisive advance in wages at the expense of profits, a shorter working week, to lift the lower paid and advance pensions and social services at the cost of war preparations. Such a decisive challenge could rally the overwhelming majority of the people, isolate the Tories and open the way for a great new advance.

A New Policy, with New Leaders

The battle on policy coincides with the struggle for succession in the Parliamentary Labour Party, now made doubly acute by the electoral defeat. The results were hardly declared before the top group which have dominated the Labour front bench for so long were accusing each other of senility. But the effort to unseat Attlee at the opening of the new Parliament was not only due to his age. It was already visible in the struggle over Bevan's expulsion when Attlee's proposals did not go far enough for the most extreme right wing. The matter is not only one of the extreme right wishing to replace Attlee by Morrison or Gaitskell on account of age but because the latter above all is the new chosen instrument for right wing policy.

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The battle requires to go forward in every section of the Labour movement, in every trade union, in every constituency party for the new socialist policy to advance the movement and to win a new leadership pledged to that policy. Decisive for victory in that struggle is the place of the Communist Party in it. The overwhelming necessity in developing the great mass movement required to defeat the Tories is unity of all the working class forces. Nothing less can meet the needs of the situation. In the struggle against German rearmament and the H-bomb, in the wages fight, in the movement against the Tory Rent Bill, the Communist Party and the *Daily Worker* played a decisive rôle. Its members played a leading part in the factories and the trade unions in association with militant labour workers to develop and strengthen the great left movement. It carried forward that struggle in the General Election campaign. It goes without saying that the Communist Party will do all in its power to see that the struggle is organised against the Tory Government in the new conditions.

Sweep Away the Bans

A successful fight for the new socialist programme and a new leadership in the Labour movement cannot be waged as long as the left forces are prepared tacitly or openly to tolerate the bans and proscriptions imposed on the Communist Party by the right wing leadership. This is their great weapon of disruption to impede the full effective mobilisation of the united forces of the left. Continued toleration can only pave the way to further attacks on all sections of the left. The fight for the militant programme demands a new concerted effort to sweep away all bans and proscriptions. More. The successful united fight needs Communist representation in Parliament. A growing understanding has been created among wide sections of the workers in this election that Communist representation is vital for the British working class, vital for the future of the Labour movement, vital for peace. That understanding now requires to be carried into every section of the movement.

June 15, 1955.

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ILLEGALITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

D. N. PRITT, Q.C.

THE use of atom and hydrogen bombs is universally condemned by the mass of mankind everywhere, and those who propose to use them stand on the defensive. They are driven, indeed, to the century-old argument that terrible weapons are really weapons of peace because governments will refrain from using them. The fight against the atom bomb on the basis of humanity can find important support in the rules and principles of international law. International law has in fact rendered some service through the centuries to the cause of peace, and far more substantial service to the struggle to keep the practices of the war-makers within some limits, and thus to mitigate the destructive effects of war. The appalling destructiveness of nuclear weapons thus makes them an especial target of international law. So let us examine the application of international law to the use of such weapons.

To apply principles of law to any problem, one must begin by seeing the facts. The present situation has become more precise, and more extreme and horrible, as a result of three decisions taken in recent months by the powers grouped round the United States of America. These decisions are: (1) to equip the forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (N.A.T.O.) with nuclear weapons, and that, too, on a scale which amounts to organising these forces to wage war primarily with nuclear weapons; (2) to proceed with the policy of re-arming Western Germany, and of equipping that army, with the rest of the N.A.T.O. forces, with nuclear weapons; and, above all (3) to use nuclear weapons, not merely by way of reprisal, after they shall have been used by other belligerents, but from the start of any war, without waiting for what any other combatant might do.

This was made clear by Field Marshal Lord Montgomery in October, 1954. He said:

> I want to make it absolutely clear that we at S.H.A.P.E. (Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers in Europe) are basing all our operational planning on using atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons in our defence. It is no longer a question of 'they may possibly be used'. It is very definitely 'they will be used if we are attacked'.

('If we are attacked' is not of course a limiting condition of the policy; it is the formula employed by all potential aggressors to

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misdescribe their aggression.) At about the same time, General Gruenther, Supreme Commander of N.A.T.O. forces in Europe, stated:

> I have no choice except to use atomic weapons, whether the enemy does so or not.

These semi-official declarations were followed within a few weeks by a formal decision of the Council of N.A.T.O., meeting in Paris in November, 1954. As quoted from the British Government's Statement on Defence, 1955 (Cmd. 9391, February, 1955), this meeting 'approved a report . . . on the most effective pattern of N.A.T.O. military strength which assumed the use, in a major war, of nuclear weapons'. The British Government, for itself, in this same Statement on Defence—an important document in which it would not make any statement of policy differing from that of the U.S.A. and of N.A.T.O. generally—made it clear that what was contemplated by way of 'the use in a major war of nuclear weapons' is the use of such weapons *proprio motu,* immediately on the outset of any major war. Sir Winston Churchill, in a speech in the House of Commons on the policy set out in the Statement on Defence, put the matter crudely and clearly:

> There are big industrial and administrative targets behind the Iron Curtain, and any effective deterrent policy must have the power to paralyse them at the outset or very shortly afterwards.

He added:

> We have already hundreds of bases of attack from all angles, and have made an intricate study of suitable targets.

The above statements, coming, incongruously enough from states who have renounced in the United Nations Charter the use of force as an instrument of policy, demonstrate that the danger involved in the mere production and storage of these weapons is real and terrible. No one, jurist or layman, should be deceived by propaganda to the effect that any particular country is stronger than others in these weapons, or that the use of such weapons would destroy the world and accordingly no state is likely to use them, their production and storage thus becoming a guarantee of peace! The existence of such weapons in the hands of those professing such a policy constitutes a grave threat of war.

The position to which one has to apply the law is thus simple, as simple as it is horrible. There is no question of the N.A.T.O. Powers claiming to prepare and maintain nuclear weapons merely so that they may be able to resort to them in the event of some other Power

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using such weapons against them, however unreal the threat of any such use may be. They have made clear, both by words and deeds, that their policy is to use nuclear weapons as an integral, primary and immediate element of their strategy and tactics in war, and that they are equipping themselves to carry out that policy. And it must not be forgotten that the knowledge that the use of nuclear weapons from the start may be of decisive advantage puts in the way of Powers who adopt such a policy an overwhelming temptation to start a war (sometimes delicately called 'preventive') when they pretend to suspect that they may be attacked, even in circumstances when it is clear that no threat of war against them is in existence.

What, then, is the position in International Law of those states who propose to use nuclear weapons in this way and who moreover insist on manufacturing such weapons in the absence of any threat of the use of such weapons against them which could even justify the preparation for such use by way of reprisal? To answer this question of Law, one must first know something of the effect of nuclear weapons, in order accurately to apply to them the principles of law involved.

These effects are already pretty well known. They have been stated many times by scientists, and it is sufficient for present purposes to record that, at the least,

(a) such weapons destroy life as well as property *quite indiscriminately* over areas of many square miles;

(b) they produce illness, suffering, incapacity and slow death, over periods of months and years, to those who have been within even remote proximity to the explosions;

(c) they produce infertility and abnormal births among those who have been in such proximity, and among their descendants;

(d) they may produce various forms of radio-activity causing illness, incapacity, and slow death to persons hundreds of miles away from the point of explosion.

In the Statement on Defence above mentioned, the indiscriminate quality of these weapons is referred to, cynically enough, in the phrase: 'The power of these weapons is such that accuracy of aim assumes less importance; thus attacks can be delivered by aircraft flying at great speed and at great heights'.

What does international law say of weapons such as this?

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First, in what does international law consist? The answer is well stated in the judgment of the International Military Tribunal at Nürnberg:

> The law of War is to be found not only in treaties, but in the customs and practices of states, which gradually obtained universal recognition, and from the general principles of justice applied by jurists and practised by military courts. This law is not static, but by continual adaptation follows the needs of a changing world. Indeed, in many cases treaties do no more than express and define for more accurate reference the principles of law already existing.

It cannot be suggested either that the unwritten laws of war are superseded by treaties that embody, or incorporate, or improve, parts of those laws, or that the use of new weapons, unknown to past generations and indeed to those who have drawn up relatively recent codes or treaties, is not covered by the application of the principles established in and by the existing unwritten law and codes. Any such suggestion is answered by the Preamble to the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, as follows:

> The High Contracting Parties clearly do not intend that unforeseen cases should, in the absence of a written undertaking, be left to the arbitrary judgment of military commanders.
>
> Until a more complete code of the laws of war has been issued, the High Contracting Parties deem it expedient to declare that, in cases not included in the Regulations adopted by them, the inhabitants and the belligerents remain under the protection and the rule of the law of nations, as they result from the usages established among civilised peoples, from the laws of humanity, and the dictates of the public conscience.

So much for the general nature of the laws which have to be applied. What are the provisions covering the particular case of nuclear weapons? The essence of these provisions can be stated shortly, thus: It is not and never has been any part of international law that belligerents may seek victory by any and every act of indiscriminate terrorism or destruction. On the contrary, international law lays down that the only legitimate object of warfare is to defeat the enemy's military forces by the use of legitimate weapons. Further, the infliction of death or injury upon civilians is *prima facie* illegal, and can only be justified where it is directly and inevitably involved in the pursuit of the one legitimate object of defeating the enemy's military forces by the use of legitimate weapons. Even in seeking to destroy the enemy's military forces, belligerents are not free to employ any and every means. The laws of war impose many limitations on the employment of unusually painful, or cruel, or indiscriminate weapons, such as gases, bacteria,

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or dum-dum or explosive bullets; and they also forbid the use of weapons which add to the sufferings of wounded men, or lead inevitably to their subsequent death.

The principles above stated are partly to be found in the unwritten laws and partly in Codes and Treaties. One general restriction is stated in Article 22 of the Hague Regulations for Land Warfare of 1907, which says:

> The right of belligerents to adopt means of injuring the enemy is not unlimited.

As early as 1868, it was laid down in the Preamble to the Declaration of St. Petersburg that

> The employment of arms which uselessly aggravate the sufferings of disabled men or render their death inevitable would be contrary to the laws of humanity.

In the Hague Declaration of 1899, the Contracting Powers agreed

> To abstain from the use of projectiles the sole object of which is the diffusion of asphyxiating or deleterious gases.

Article 23 (a) of the Hague Regulations for Land Warfare, mentioned above, prohibited the employment of 'poison or poisoned arms', and Article 23 (e) forbad 'arms, projectiles, or material of a nature to cause superfluous injury'. Article 171 of the Treaty of Versailles, 1919, recited that 'the use of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and all analogous liquids, materials or devices' was prohibited as unlawful. Article 5 of the Treaty of Washington, 1922, ran as follows:

> The use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and all analogous liquids, materials, or devices having been justly condemned by the general opinion of the civilised world, and the prohibition of such employment having been adopted in treaties to which a majority of the civilised Powers are parties, the signatory Powers, to the end that this prohibition shall be universally accepted as part of international law, binding alike the conscience and practice of nations, declare their assent to such prohibition, agree to be bound thereby as between themselves, and invite all other civilised nations to adhere thereto.

And the Geneva Protocol of 1925, after a recital which followed the terms of the above Article of the Washington Treaty, declared that

> The High Contracting Parties, so far as they are not already parties to treaties prohibiting such use, accept this prohibition, agree to extend this prohibition to the use of bacteriological methods of warfare, and agree to be bound as between themselves according to this declaration.

It is true that not all of these documents became of themselves binding on all states, for some states were not parties to some of

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them, or did not ratify them; but they show clearly the trend of the unwritten law on which they were based, and the cumulative effect of the unwritten law and of these treaties and instruments is clearly to establish that the infliction of injuries of all the kinds described in the documents mentioned offends against international law.

The written laws of war relating to attacks upon civilians and civilian property are to the same effect. Thus, the Hague Regulations of 1899 and 1907 prohibited (in Article 25)

> The attack or bombardment by whatever means of towns, villages, habitations or buildings which are not defended;

and they laid down (in Article 27) that

> In sieges and bombardments all necessary steps must be taken to spare, as far as possible, buildings dedicated to religion, art, science, or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals. . . .

The Hague Rules of Aerial Warfare (1923), though not formally incorporated into written international law, are an authoritative statement of international juristic opinion. Article 22 of these Rules declares that

> Aerial bombardment for the purpose of terrorising the civilian population, of destroying or damaging private property not of a military character, or of injuring non-combatants is prohibited.

And Article 24, after declaring that

> Aerial bombardment is legitimate only when directed at a military object, that is to say, an object of which the destruction or injury would constitute a distinct military advantage to the belligerent,

sets out a list of military objectives which could be legitimately bombarded, and added that, where these specified objectives

> are so situated that they cannot be bombarded without the indiscriminate bombardment of the civilian population, the aircraft must abstain from bombardment.

How do these principles, whether resting solely on unwritten law or confirmed or extended by Treaties or Codes, apply to weapons as utterly indiscriminatory in their effects as nuclear weapons? It needs no argument to demonstrate, on these principles, that the use of such weapons is illegal. Nor are 'tactical' nuclear weapons any less illegal. There is no sharp distinction, in the conditions of modern warfare, between strategy and tactics, and there is no ground whatever for supposing that the 'tactical' application of such indiscriminate and uncontrollable weapons can be confined, say, to military installations whilst sparing the civilian quarters of a town to which they are attached. The only real visible difference between 'strategical' and 'tactical' nuclear weapons lies in the means by

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which they are sent on their task of inflicting deadly, indiscriminate, and long-drawn-out misery or death to combatants, civilians and unborn children.

It follows inevitably that any state which prepares nuclear weapons for use in any war, not in reprisal against unreal threats of the use of such weapons by its enemies, but *ab initio,* of its own motion, is preparing to offend against the fundamental principles of international law stated above; and the actual use of such weapons at and from the start of a war, apart from any question as to who is the aggressor, *i.e.,* the N.A.T.O. policy—would be an offence against international law. But preparation for such a war of itself, may in addition amount to a 'crime against peace' within the meaning of the Nürnberg Charter (a Charter which greatly strengthened the the prestige and authority of international law, and administered a salutary rebuke to those who seek to argue that the barbarities of the Second World War had the effect of diminishing that prestige and authority). This Charter defines as a 'Crime Against Peace' the

> planning, preparation, or waging of a war of aggression, or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing.

Further, in the event of war, any state which uses nuclear weapons first, of its own motion, may also be guilty of 'war crimes'. These are defined in the Charter as:

> Violations of the laws or customs of war. Such violations shall include, but shall not be limited to . . . wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity.

They may equally be guilty of 'crimes against humanity' which are defined in the same Charter as

> Murder . . . and other inhuman acts committed against any civilian population.

And it is plain that the use of nuclear weapons on a scale sufficient to destroy masses of people indiscriminately—a scale plainly regarded as possible and even probable by many of the advocates of these weapons and demonstrated to be probable to the point of certainty by the events of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Bikini, could amount also to the crime of genocide, which is dealt with by the 'Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide'. This Convention was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December, 1948, and is now in force. The Convention lays down that 'genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law, which they undertake

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to prevent and to punish'; and the definition of genocide includes 'killing members of a group, with intent to destroy, wholly or in part, a national, ethical, racial, or religious group'. But, whatever the precise measure of guilt which the use of these weapons may incur under the Nürnberg Charter, or other recent documents, there is no doubt of their offence against international law generally, as stated above.

The legal position being thus as clear in its condemnation of the use of nuclear weapons as is the humane attitude of thousands of millions of ordinary people throughout the world, there remains the question: what should now be done to prevent the use of these weapons?

It should not be thought that, just because international law in its proper application clearly forbids the use of nuclear weapons, that it is unnecessary to enter into a convention specifically forbidding it. In the development of international law, treaties and conventions affirming and codifying the principles of the unwritten law, extending it in details or making its application clearer, and (above all) bringing the governments of various states to the express acceptance of the law as stated in the convention and thus to a new and solemn undertaking to obey the law as thus defined and accepted, have always had a special value and played a special part, far more important than that of corresponding legislation in municipal law, in bringing states to good international behaviour. To quote again the Nürnberg judgment, 'In many cases treaties do no more than express and define . . . the principles of law already existing.'

In such circumstances there is little room for doubt as to what should be done. There should be an immediate meeting of the states principally concerned, either within the framework of the United Nations or separately, to draw up a Convention providing for the immediate destruction of all stocks of nuclear weapons, and prohibiting the manufacture or use of such weapons. Such a convention, to be effective, would require full provision for international inspection and control, to ensure that its provisions were fully carried out by all parties. Such inspection and control, from a technical point of view, are wholly feasible, for the production and preservation of nuclear weapons are elaborate operations and cannot readily be concealed. The public opinion of the world demands such measures; their realisation will immensely lighten the tensions and dangers to which mankind is today exposed, release vast forces for peaceful production, and lay the foundations for a lasting peace. They would also vindicate and strengthen international law.

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TRADE UNION PROBLEMS

FRANK HAXELL

THE time is fast approaching when the trade unions will have to re-examine their attitude and approach to the never-ending demands for increased production and for support without any qualifications for the drive to increase output per man hour.

It is readily admitted on all sides that the Trades Union Congress General Council has played no small part in assisting and encouraging the introduction of new methods of production and has offered no resistance to new systems of bonus payments, the implementation of methods of work study and time and motion study, as the means of measuring payment for output. In fact, the trade unions generally have been extremely vocal in the pleas for increased production and calling on the workers to work harder and to modify lines of demarcation that impede production.

The score board would appear to be that the volume of production per man hour has increased from 1948 to 1954 by 19 per cent.; the working hours over the same period have increased from 46.7 to 48.5, approximately two hours; and the earnings in terms of purchasing power, to put it at its very best, remain at the same level, in sharp contrast to the staggeringly high rate of profits being enjoyed by the employers.

The argument that the economic recovery of Britain lies in increased production so that we can export more goods in order to pay for imports cannot be accepted on its face value, for in such broad and general terms it can hide the real purpose underlying the drive to increase output, and one needs to ask for what purpose and to what use is increased production to be put. If the real aim of increased production is to step up the output of armaments, services and goods as a war potential, to wage war in the colonies, to continue and extend the type of action taking place in Malaya and Kenya, to ultimately engage these islands in a third world war, then its purpose is not for the economic recovery of Britain but, on the contrary, for the ultimate destruction of Britain. If it is merely as a means to increase the already overflowing coffers of the landlords and industrialists and in the application fails continuously to increase the purchasing power of the people who live by hand and brain, then it will only accentuate any developing economic crises, undermine the possibility of economic recovery, bring nothing but hardship, poverty and misery to the people.

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If, on the other hand, its purpose is to develop and facilitate trading relations with all countries, to improve the health and well-being of the peoples throughout the world and particularly in the colonies and the British Commonwealth, to raise the living standards of the British people, then it can lead to a happier, healthier and more prosperous Britain.

One thing is certain at the moment and that is that the last ten years of higher output per man hour have not in any way improved the living standards of the members of the vast majority of the trade unions. The basis of the trade unions' support for increased production must be conditioned by the purpose for which it is being employed, and by guarantees that increased production will not result in increased profits for the employers but will be reflected in the wage packets, in pensions, and in health and social services.

The problem is a very real one. There are developments in industrial techniques and processes which will in the next few years completely revolutionise the methods of production in British industry. The development of automation will substantially reduce the labour force required in the production of practically every commodity. A few examples can be seen by the development at Ferranti's of a device capable of controlling 50 separate process machines operating independently a job which before required machine minders. At Batchelors Peas Limited the installation of an electronic eye sorting machine has meant that 126,000,000 peas per day can be examined and those blemished rejected, a job previously done by hand. At Fords in Cleveland, engine blocks are stated to be machined automatically by a process requiring nine men in contrast to the previous method requiring 35 men. It affects not only what are normally classified as industrial workers, but the clerical workers employed in factories and offices. According to 'Accountancy' of January, 1955, the introduction of automatic control enables some actuarial tables that previously required 28,000 man hours at a cost of $200,000 to be completed in 1,343 man hours and 104 hours of computor time at a total cost of $15,000.

These new systems, along with the introduction of methods of work study and of time and motion study, require that the trade unions shall ensure that where they are introduced and are liable to displace the existing labour, there should be a reduction in the working week without any loss of earnings; and a fair share of the increased production reflected in the wage packets of the workers.

The attitude which the trade unions take on this problem will reflect itself in the approach to a number of other equally important

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problems. It goes without saying that the general overriding support without qualifications for increased production as one of the main planks for our economic recovery has conditioned the pursuance of policies of wage restraint, of moderation in our applications for wage increases, of increased wages for the lower paid workers and a standstill so far as other workers are concerned. It has reflected itself in our approach to strike action as a means of rectifying our grievances and obtaining satisfaction for the justifiable wage claims that have from time to time been made, and created circumstances in which a greater reliance is being placed in arbitration courts as a means to obtain some redress. Arbitration freely sought by both sides as a means of solving the differences between them may be a good thing. But arbitration forced on the trade unions, either by law or by pressure from other sources, is a highly dangerous state of affairs which requires not only examination but positive action by the trade unions themselves. Arbitration and conciliation is not new to industrial Britain but, in fact, goes back over many years and has in the course of time taken many different forms. Today the trade unions are being faced with a set of circumstances which virtually compels them to accept arbitration as a final court of settlement of any issue that has already been subject in most cases to months of negotiation and conciliation.

The pattern of modern industrial relations is that a union, through the agreed industrial machinery for the industry, submits to the employers its claim for an increase in wages, for an improvement in the conditions of employment for the employees in the industry, or any other matter that is competent to be dealt with by that machinery. Usually such negotiations proceed over a number of months and are not unusually terminated by the inability of both sides to reach agreement. The issue then is that a dispute between the parties exists and what steps should be taken to resolve the dispute. There are two avenues open—to forward the matter under Order 1376 to the Ministry of Labour for submission to the National Arbitration Tribunal or to give notice of strike action. If the latter course is adopted by the trade unions, the employers' federation and in many cases the union, advise the Ministry of Labour that a dispute exists and that strike action is pending or has been taken. The conciliation department of the Ministry in such circumstances seeks an interview with the parties separately and, where practicable and advisable, jointly, for the purpose of acquainting itself with the nature and circumstances of the dispute and to find a formula for settlement. At this stage the national newspapers enter the picture

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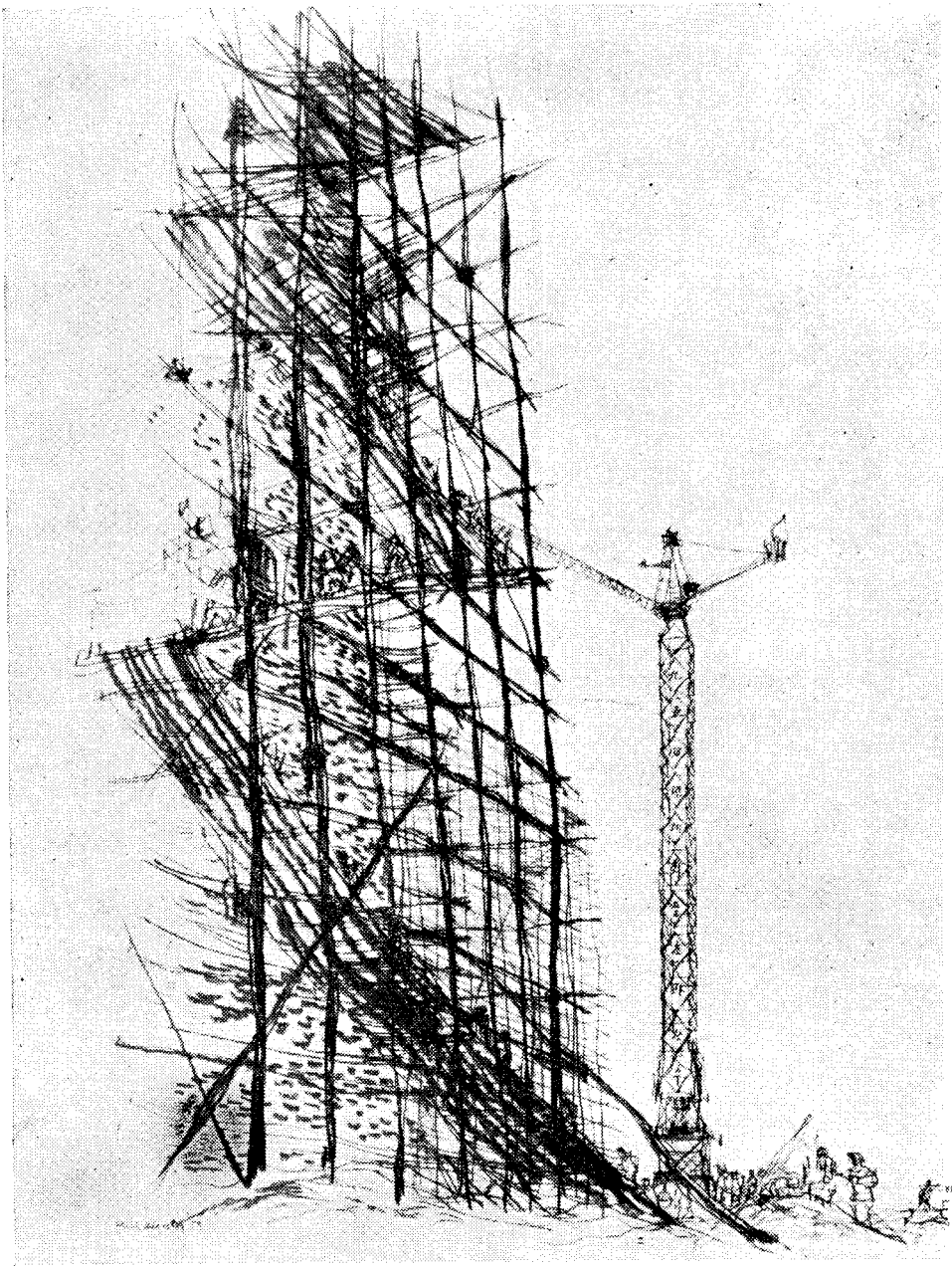
Drawings of Korea:



PYONGYANG : A NEW ENGINEERING POLYTECHNIC UNDER CONSTRUCTION

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by Paul Hogarth

KOREAN WORKER

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and, with one or two notable exceptions, immediately proceed to write up the dispute in such a manner as to attempt by innuendo and distortion to make the general public hostile to the strikers and their claims, and, at the same time, weaken and undermine the morale of both the leadership of the union and the strikers. If the conciliation department at the Ministry is unable to get the parties to reach agreement, they then, more often than not, seek to obtain the calling off of the strike on the basis of a Court of Enquiry—generally a public hearing before a chairman and two members selected by the Ministry, one from each panel provided by the British Employers' Federation and the Trades Union Congress General Council. The purpose is to enquire into the causes and circumstances of the dispute and make recommendations. The result is, more often than not, an adverse report for the trade unions.

Up to recent months this procedure from the point of view of terminating the strike was fairly successful, although what those workers got out of it is a matter for conjecture. But with the advent of a change in the attitude of a number of unions who refused to call off the strike either on the basis of the setting up of a Court of Enquiry or on the basis of acceptance of the findings and recommendations of the Court, a new factor is apparently being introduced. This is that the General Purposes Committee of the Trades Union Congress, after consultation with the union or unions involved, seeks to find ways and means of re-opening negotiations and proposing formulae as the basis for settlement. One does not quarrel with the Trades Union Congress in trying to find a solution in the interests of the workers involved and the Trade Union Movement as a whole. But it is an aspect of activity which needs to be closely examined before it becomes the order of the day. A number of questions need to be asked and answered. To what extent are these activities going to impinge on the accepted rights of the unions to conduct their negotiations and obtain settlement of their claims in the manner best suited to their members and the industries in which they are employed? Is this likely to lead to a further extension of the type of negotiating machinery that existed in Fords, where at the employers' behest the Trades Union Congress had representatives on the negotiating machinery? Is it likely to lead to a situation in which in finality the General Council assumes the function of negotiating on behalf of its affiliated membership?

If these things are likely to happen, the quicker they are nipped in the bud, the better!

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THE AMERICAN SCENE

JOHN WILLIAMSON

THE pro-fascist development in the U.S.A. these last years has been an integral part of its preparations for war. It was designed to divide the country and to break up the popular majority that supported Roosevelt's policy of peaceful co-existence with the Soviet Union.

While U.S. imperialism is united on its world-wide aims, it is divided on how to realise these aims in the present world situation. While the Eisenhower-Dulles administration follows a calculated war policy, based on the phony theory of 'positions of strength', the Knowland-McCarthy-Radford group policy is one of immediate H-bomb warfare. These war incendiary forces are a constant factor of uncertainty, since they can instigate provocations to set off war in an atmosphere already powder-charged by the Eisenhower-Dulles programme and activities. However, there are some people in the ranks of Big Business, like the steel magnate Weir, who are expressing second thoughts about foreign policy. Further, there was significance in the Los Angeles speech of the old militarist-turned-industrialist MacArthur, who cast strong doubts on the 'position of strength' policy of the administration. Again there was a certain new note in the conclusions of the long-time jingo Hearst, after his trip to the Soviet Union. Lastly, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Walter George, declared: 'There seems to be a lack of enthusiasm and a lack of positive attitude on our part toward a top level conference which, if we take a strong initiative, might do some good'.

Domestically, the hysteria, jailings, and anti-Communist attacks and legislation present a sinister element soberly estimated by Wm. Z. Foster, national chairman of the Communist Party, when he wrote:

> The Eisenhower Administration is not a fascist government as such, but its general direction is in a fascist direction. . . . The growth of McCarthyism during the past few years is one of the many signs of the sharpening trends towards fascism in the U.S. It marks the passage of certain reactionary monopolist elements to the adoption of open fascist methods. . . . But this attack has not reached the stage of actual fascism. (November, 1954.)

Since the interests of the American workers and people demand a reversal of this trend, the immediate objective of all who really believe in the Bill of Rights is to prevent the Eisenhower Adminis-

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tration from taking the country further down the road of McCarthyism. With this in mind, the Communist Party of the United States of America issued a new programme, entitled 'The American Way to Jobs, Peace, Equal Rights and Democracy'. Its central theme of defeating reaction and changing the situation was

> The unity of all democratic and peace-loving forces is needed—unity on one issue or a series of issues—unity irrespective of ideological and political differences on other questions and on longer range goals.

To realise this, a decisive responsibility rests upon the workers and the labour movement. Labour does not play a leading political rôle today. The trade unions have not even challenged the war policies of either the Truman or the Eisenhower administrations. Their own ranks are infested with Red-baiting. On this the programme says:

> The answer to our present national plight is not a switch-back to another Truman-type administration. . . . What is needed is a new administration which starts to build again where the New Deal left off.

The hope of realising this rests upon two things: one, the more energetic involvement of the workers in struggle to defend their economic needs, and two, the ability of the 15 million union members to come forward as a distinct and powerful political force, even within the framework of the two-party system, and to exercise an independent influence based on a programme that represents their true interests. With such experiences, and the accompanying struggles, *the workers would begin to free themselves from the clutches of the two-party system.* Only with such a development, can the perspectives materialise of a mass third party with labour as its main base.

On a world scale the struggle for peace has correctly been projected as the central issue before all mankind. Clearly this is equally and especially true in the U.S.A., the centre of the organisers of the H-bomb warfare against the world. However, in the specific conditions in the U.S., the struggle for peace and against pro-fascist reaction has to be united into *one struggle.*

There are present today certain new currents. These include the growth of the anti-McCarthy movement that ended in his censure by the U.S. Senate (true, the censure was for insulting fellow-Senators, but it helped to dissipate the intellectual terrorism that the man held over the nation); the first blow against the informer system by the release from jail of Alex Trachtenberg and George Charney as a result of judicial recognition of perjury by the spy Matusow; the granting of a passport to Professor Lattimore; the Supreme Court decisions freeing the Secretary-Treasurer of the United Electrical

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Union and the former manager of the *New York Daily Worker* from convictions for contempt of Congress by invoking the 5th amendment; as well as the decision that said Professor Peters had been wrongfully dismissed as a security risk; and the granting of bail to the Communist Central Committee members upon their release from jail on March 1.

Do these new currents mean that there is already a new situation? Significant though they are, there is not yet a turn of the tide. The pro-fascist attacks continue. This is seen by the Smith Act convictions recently for 'membership in the Communist Party' of Lightfoot and Scales and the conspiracy conviction of the Denver Seven; the scheduled new Smith Act trial of the Communist Party general secretary Dennis and his Central Committeemen co-defendants for 'membership in C.P.'; after just serving five years in jail for being members of its Central Committee; the upholding of the constitutionality of the infamous McCarran Registration Act, by the Washington (District of Columbia) Appeals Court; the adoption in 1954 of the Communist Control Act that outlaws the Communist Party by name and whose criteria of Communists is such as to include any trade union leader or New Dealer desired; the string of anti-labour 'right to work' state laws adopted recently; the monthly additions to the so-called subversive list by the Attorney General; and the continuous proceedings under the McCarran Registration Act against progressive organisations as 'Communist fronts'.

While the time-table of attack has been upset, these new currents reflect the beginnings of a resistance movement that can only bring about a change in the situation if they grow, develop and register real strength. This decisive task cannot be separated from other developments of concern to all Americans. These include:

1. Organising and extending the basic sentiment for peace that exists in a confused way (and together with world developments forced Eisenhower to commit himself to a Big Four meeting 'at the summit') so as to defeat the Eisenhower aim of merely talking and delaying and to insist that a measure of the people's will for peace shall earnestly be negotiated at such a conference.

2. The coming unification of the American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisations, despite its projected reactionary constitution that must be amended, opens the door for new unionising drives, for active labour intervention in the 1956 elections, and despite the wishes of Meany and Reuther, will facilitate the development of a stronger left wing in the entire trade union movement.

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3. The series of strikes especially in the South, which are swallows in a spring where larger economic struggles can be expected nation-wide during the next year.

4. The extensive activity of the Negro people and progressive minded whites, for a new step forward in the struggle for equal rights, which has received an impetus from the Supreme Court decisions against segregation in the schools.

United States imperialism shouts about being the leader of what it chooses to call the 'free world', while at home the people are confronted with fear, witch-hunts, hysteria, and jailings for their political ideas, for 'guilt by association', for upholding the Bill of Rights. The expression of world opinion on these developments is highly important—and particular attention is given in the U.S.A. to opinions from Britain and the countries of Asia. Because U.S. imperialism occupies the position it does today in the capitalist world, the outcome of events there is of concern to the people of every other nation. It is in that spirit that organised protests from Britain and other countries assume importance around such issues as:

Stop the second trial for 'membership in the C.P.' of Gene Dennis and his co-defendants as contrary to democratic principles and the time-honoured law against double jeopardy.

Ask the Supreme Court to invalidate the vicious McCarran Act that characterises Communists as criminals, conspirators, agents of a foreign power, then requires them to register as such, and provides a penalty of five years in jail and $10,000 fine for *each day* each member does not register.

The 20 year sentence hanging over Steve Nelson for 'seditious utterance'.

Grant a passport to the world famous singer, Paul Robeson.

Presidential amnesty for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Gus Hall, and all other Smith Act victims.

Such actions would not only be in accord with the long-established tradition of the British workers practising international labour solidarity. It would be a direct blow in the self-interest and defence of the British people and for the independence of the British nation.

The Voice of Britain, added to the new awakenings among the American people themselves, can influence the Eisenhower Administration to halt all Smith Act and other guilt-by-association persecutions, and restore the country to a peace-time status by withdrawing all U.S. troops from stations overseas. This is the type of relations and peaceful co-existence between the U.S. and Britain that the peoples of both nations desire.

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THE PEOPLE AT LARGE

SANCHO PANZA

They who have put out the people's eyes,
reproach them of their blindness.—*Milton.*

THE elections have come and gone. It is befitting that those of us who have done our democratic duty by going to the ballot box should stop a moment and ponder about ourselves, the people at large. It seems to me that our role in the election was pretty poor. The only question we were expected to answer according to our democratic constitution was, who of the two dithering and evasive party leaders, to wit Mr. Attlee or Sir Anthony Eden, should select the men to govern us. We have answered that. But there were many more questions, like the Hydrogen Bomb and German Rearmament, we would have liked to answer. It is said that we can air our views, we can say what we think in the pub and the club, we can express our opinions in the correspondence columns of the newspapers, but when it comes to the elections there is very little room for our views.

I do not agree with Mr. Crossman that 'the British people believes, not in governing itself, but in choosing its government and then blaming it for everything that goes wrong' (*New Statesman and Nation*, May 14, 1955), nor that we like to leave everything to 'them', although we are always asked to do so. The admonition 'leave it to us' which we hear so much at various Labour conferences ought to be familiar by now to Mr. Crossman. The Labour Party was built by the people to make the country more democratic, but as soon as the Labour Party was ready it was steered by the leaders into the trap of the Two Party System.

Another thing that occurred to me during the election campaign is that the leaders of our main political parties do not know us at all or the degree of success of their educational reforms. They either underestimate or overestimate our capacity to think. We were offered either Party Manifestoes which needed a good deal of hard intellectual work to find the differences between the Conservative and Labour Manifestoes or else cheap catchwords, stunts or slanging matches. That is, we were either treated like university dons or spectators at a football match, or, at the best, regarded 'as a rather unadmirable kind of adult', as *The Times* put it. The

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levity of our leaders revealed during the election is supposed to be caused by the cultural standard of the people at large. It seems to me that their attitude to the people has not much changed from the time long before 'the Age of the Common Man', when it was found enough to give the people 'a catch-word and they will adopt it as a creed, a personality and they will not bother about the argument'. Complaints of public indifference are unwarranted. Voters with understanding are not wanted. It is much more convenient to 'them' to keep the electorate politically illiterate.

'THEY' AND THE PEOPLE AT LARGE

> Faith there have been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them.—*Shakespeare.*

Election time, as everybody knows, is a grand time for the people at large. We are made much of. We are wooed, petted, politely spoken to. We matter to 'them'. All that is said about us between the elections is forgotten and forgiven. We cease to be the many-headed monster, the mob, the rabble, the vulgar herd, the crowd, the populace, the men in the street, the men in the pub, Tom, Dick and Harry, rag, tag and bobtail and easy-oozy asses and become respectable individuals, possessors of a precious vote which we are free to give to men whom we have not chosen and often not even heard of. Who, by the way, in their turn in the course of time will become in Parliament practically a mob to their betters. Yes, we matter to 'them'. But 'they' do not think much of us. The disdain of the people is characteristic of our democracy.

Who are 'they'? Somebody defined 'them' as 'all those who refuse to be merged in the mass', but I think we may define 'them' more truly as men who have a finger in the pie we have cooked, but which we never get a chance to eat ourselves. 'They' are the enterprising few, the elite, the right people, men with the right background, the people who matter, the private income men, the clubmen, the select, the public figures, the men of consequence, the gentlemen of wealth and breeding, the natural leaders of men or simply rich men. These claim to be the spokesmen for the people. They claim to understand the people, their desires, their needs, their hopes, their thoughts and even their hearts and therefore claim to be fit to govern us and to decide what is good for us. 'They' are planted everywhere so we can't get hold of anything. They do not like us and often fear us because we can be very inconvenient.

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THE AGE OF THE COMMON MAN

How cheerfully he seems to grin,
How neatly spreads his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in
With gently smiling jaws!

—*Lewis Carroll.*

We are supposed to have entered in Britain the 'Age of the Common Man' characterised by 'mass democracy' or 'popular sovereignty'. I must frankly admit that I do not know what this 'Age of the Common Man' is. In a mass democracy you would expect people to take part in various ways in the business of government which is not the case in Britain. So they cannot mean that. But let that be. It may get clear as we go along.

In the 'Age of the Common Man' the people at large are called the common men, the ordinary men, the average men or common-or-garden citizens (Mr. Morrison). The common men are expected 'to get on with it', and be busy with their own affairs. Public service is expected from them only during disasters, like wars, flooding and railway accidents. They are not expected to think as it may be unsettling if they did.

The common men can also be useful as public. There are many functions for the public. They can be useful for the polls of 'public opinion'. The public 'with its mob yearning to be instructed, edified and pulled by the nose' is useful to the newspaper proprietors, to the cinema and theatre proprietors, to writers, etc. They can be useful to the advertisers, who can create wants and make the public want things which they do not want. The public can certainly be useful to the Football Pools, to the organisers of sport, to Billy Graham and other popular entertainments.

The art of government in the 'Age of the Common Man' is based on distrust of the people at large. The main principles of government are: the principle of mystery of government and the principle of the guidance of public opinion. A good democratic government in the 'Age of the Common Man' will therefore see to it that the people at large are awed by the intricacies and complications of government and by the heavy responsibility and exhausting labour of its members. People must never be told of anything that matters, but commonplace decisions and things should be highly dramatised for the consumption of the people, and the public must be taken into confidence after the decisions are irrevocably taken. A good democratic government will not allow people to think for themselves, but will train them to be good citizens who always do as they are told.

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The guidance of public opinion is therefore of paramount importance. It must be exercised dexterously and delicately through various public-opinion machinery known as 'mass media', such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television and films. In the 'Age of the Common Man' the people should be kept interested in the lives and doings of the rich, the society ladies, film stars, court circles, journalistic gossip in general and light entertainment. The 'Age of the Common Man' is distinguished from the other ages in that much more attention is paid to us and new techniques evolved to deal with us, the people at large.

DEMOCRACY

The Future is in the present, it is in the past. It is we who make it, if it is bad it will be our fault.—*Anatole France.*

There are many attempts by our politicians and social investigators to define our existing democracy. They all differ and most of them mix the reality with wishful thinking. Even Mr. Morrison's famous soap-box test of democracy is not without wishful thinking, as I have never known 'the common-or-garden citizen' on the soap-box bring the government down, although, I am sure, he must have often wanted it. All we can say as definite is that our democracy is not yet 'the government of the people, for the people, by the people' and that it is wrong to limit the word to the institutions which we call democratic. The fact is that there is still very little democracy in Britain today. That the British people are anxious to achieve democracy and that they are capable of thinking for themselves was shown in 1945, but they chose their spokesmen badly, who had no belief in the power of the people or in the people themselves. They made also a mistake of stopping short at the election. Democracy is something to be worked for and won—by everybody. Things cannot be left to 'them'.

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REMINISCENCES OF LENIN

ELENA STASSOVA

[On the 85th anniversary of the birth of Lenin (April 22, 1870) many articles from his old comrades appeared in the Soviet press. The following was specially translated from Trud.*—Ed., L.M.]*

I WAS introduced to Vladimir Ilyich Lenin by Nadezhda Constantinovna Krupskaya. We were both teachers at Sunday schools and later worked with the 'Mobile Museum of Teaching Aids', which the teachers had themselves founded. When, after their exile, Vladimir Ilyich and, later, Nadezhda Constantinovna went abroad, we began to correspond and continued to exchange letters regularly on party affairs until 1905.

I recall how, in the period between the Second and Third Party Congresses,* Vladimir Ilyich attacked us because we were not sufficiently energetic in drawing in new people. The fact was, we were most cautious in our approach to the selection of people, being afraid of Mensheviks penetrating into our ranks. Whenever we had setbacks, therefore, we complained of the shortage of people. And so, in one of his letters to Petersburg, Vladimir Ilyich wrote: 'Young forces are needed. I would advise shooting on the spot all who dare to say there are no people. There are hosts of people in Russia; all you must have is wider and bolder, bolder and wider, still wider and still bolder recruitment of the youth, *without being afraid of them*. . . . Reject all the old habits of immobility and servility, etc. Organise *hundreds* of groups of *Vperyod* supporters, based on the youth, and encourage them to work with might and main.'

There comes to mind the Party Conference which took place that same year, 1906, first at Zagorodny Prospect in Petersburg and then at Terijoki.† The speakers at the sessions at Terijoki were both Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. I remember Fyodor Dan's speech. He spoke to his audience like an old tsarist general addressing his troops: he talked down to them. Vladimir Ilyich followed him. He spoke clearly and vividly. At the end of his speech, comrades closed round him from all sides. Besides being our leader, Vladimir was also our closest friend, to whom we could go with all our troubles, all our perplexities, with any personal or political problem.

*That is, from 1903 to 1905.—Ed.

†The conference had to be held illegally, and therefore 'moved' across the border between Russia and Finland, which under its autonomous constitution had rather more freedom than the rest of the Russian Empire.—Ed.

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In 1906 there were the elections to the State Duma.* The Petersburg Committee was united, just as the Central Committee was. We agitated for the boycott of the Witte Duma.† Among the names of the agitators, a list of which I kept, was Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. I remember how annoyed the Mensheviks were because they had no such orator in Petersburg. Whenever I summoned Vladimir Ilyich to our secret meeting place (for we were working illegally), in order to inform him of the place where he was to speak, there was never a single occasion when he failed to come, nor was he ever late. The following day he always gave me a very exact report of the number of people who had attended his meeting, the questions that had been asked and any shortcomings in the organisation to which we had sent him. . . .

I will pass on to the reminiscences I still retain in my memory of working with Vladimir Ilyich in the 1919-20 period, when I was secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. Vladimir Ilyich always worked unsparingly. There were times when Nadezhda Constantinovna or Maria Ilyinishna‡ called on me or telephoned: 'Something must be done, Vladimir Ilyich has worked himself into a state of insomnia'. On such occasions there had to be telephone calls to the members of the Central Committee and a decision adopted to grant Vladimir Ilyich leave of absence; and when the decision had been taken, Lenin had to be telephoned: 'Vladimir Ilyich, there is a Central Committee decision that you take a few days' leave'. A very irate voice was heard in reply: 'And when do you order the holiday to begin?' Vladimir Ilyich never argued against a Central Committee decision. When on leave, Lenin hunted or went mushrooming, but, strictly in conjunction with the decision of the Party Central Committee, he on no account did any work.

Lenin was concerned, in rather a touching way, about the health of his comrades. His attitude, for example, towards A. D. Tsyurupa. Comrade Tsyurupa did not take care of his health, but Vladimir Ilyich would not have this. He said that Communists are government property and to waste that was impermissible. First of all Lenin wrote a mild letter to Tsyurupa, saying that he 'was becoming quite impossible in his attitude towards government property'. When this had no effect, Ilyich wrote a stern prescription: 'For his

*These were the first elections in Russian history, held under laws secured by the 1905 Revolution.—ED.

†Witte was the Tsar's Premier, who ensured that the elections were held on a very limited franchise.—ED.

‡Lenin's sister.—ED.

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careless attitude towards government property (two attacks) A. D. Tsyurupa is given a first *warning* and *is directed to go home immediately*—Lenin.'

Another example of Lenin's modesty. He was very fond of music. His mother, Maria Alexandrovna, played the piano well and the children always listened to her. In 1919 or 1920 there was a musical evening at A. D. Tsyurupa's home. A pianist played Beethoven's *Appassionata* which Lenin knew well and liked very much. I went up to Vladimir Ilyich and asked him whether he was pleased with the performance of the sonata.

'Why do you ask me?' he replied. 'What is my opinion worth? I'm only an amateur music-lover.'

If Vladimir Ilyich had given someone an appointment but it was found on the actual morning that he could not receive the comrade at the appointed hour, he would himself, not through his secretary, telephone to the person concerned and put him off. There, on the spot he would fix a time when he would be able to see him. If just before the time when he should receive a comrade, urgent business (and there was a great deal of it in those days) prevented Vladimir Ilyich from receiving the visitor, he would send his secretary to the waiting room with the message: 'Don't waste your time sitting and waiting, because Vladimir Ilyich is not able to see you'. Then the secretary had to find out when the comrade could have another appointment and make a note of his telephone number so that Vladimir Ilyich could ring him up. . . .

In 1919 or 1920, I do not recollect exactly, Vladimir Ilyich summoned me and gave me an important political job to do. I was about to refuse on the grounds that I was only an organiser and did not feel theoretically strong enough for such a job. Vladimir Ilyich screwed up his eyes and began to question me:

'But you fought against the *Rabochaya Mysl*?'
'I did.'
'You fought against the "Economists"?'
'I did also.'
'And the Mensheviks?'
'Also.'
'And the liquidators?'
'Also.'
'Then be off and get on with the job.'

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AN ARTIST IN KOREA

PAUL HOGARTH

MY first impressions of Korea were of neat and well-cultivated fields under which the scars of war were only faintly discernible from the air. But as the plane approached the airport the crazy pattern of bomb craters became a terrible rash culminating in shattered hangars whose rusted, splintered girders glinted against the morning sun. In every direction lay the ruins of a city; it was as though one had landed on the moon. As the jeep raced along the pitted highway the enormity of Pyongyang's destruction began to be realised. Then one noticed that the desert had, in fact, been built on. Bridges had been constructed; temporary housing, schools, department stores and administrative buildings had been built—by the half million citizens who had returned.

I stayed in the only hotel, a converted department store; a large new one was being built nearby. Below my window a slogan read: 'Everything for the Reconstruction of our country.' Korean housewives, immaculate in their spotless white costumes against the dust and clamour, hurried along with shopping bags with their babies swaddled round their backs. Later, I visited the western half of the city—formerly the Korean quarter in the days of Japanese rule—from the rebuilt Moranbong Theatre which is situated on a height dominating the city, I looked across on to thousands of temporary homes; built on a wilderness where once had stood streets and houses. Here thousands had died as day and night raids brought avalanches of H.E. and incendiary bombs. Fire swept through the congested streets leaving behind a burnt-out desolate plain.

It is said that even Poles and Russians who went through the ordeal of Warsaw and Stalingrad, wept when they looked on Pyongyang after the Armistice talks brought peace. The city was consistently bombed for no other reason than that of being the biggest civilian target; for long after such military objectives as the river bridges, had ceased to exist, round-the-clock raids blasted down every kind of human habitation whether hospital, museum or school. Thousands lived like rabbits in tunnels and shelters. Over 50,000 were killed; the entire city was destroyed.

But in the months after the Armistice talks ended, the martyred city took on a new atmosphere; firm leadership gave the people the

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heart to carry on. Temporary dwellings were erected. Willing hands cleared the streets of debris. The foundations of many new buildings were laid. As the work progressed, the people returned and the population rose from 180,000 to over 500,000. Soldiers built schools. A whole educational district is under construction in the eastern quarter of the city with an engineering polytechnic and other centres of higher education. A stadium was built—largely by the voluntary labour of student brigades. An emergency Three-year Plan aims at restoring essential buildings and services; this will be followed by a Five-Year Plan. In 20 years Pyongyang will be rebuilt; the city having been completely replanned with wide boulevards and parks.

From early morning there is a ceaseless flow of traffic; across the rebuilt Daidong Bridge, porters with 'everest' carriers carrying everything from drums of oil to great loads of vegetables and timber. New buses, the gifts of Russian, Czech and German workers, trundle by, crowded with girls on their way to the rebuilt textile mills on the far side of the Daidong River. Trucks race by with building equipment and supplies, for the day begins at six on the numerous building sites. Each day there were new faces in the hotel—Russians, Czechs, Germans, Poles and Hungarians—engineers and specialists, arrive to take part in the reconstruction of the country's life. After a day or two, they move on into the interior where they advise on the erection of a new factory, the building of a bridge or a railway. Much assistance has been and is being provided by the U.S.S.R. and other People's Democracies.

On the way to a village outside Pyongyang, I passed the famous Kim-Il-Sung University, built from the donations of rice—'the patriotic rice'—of tens of thousands of North Korean peasants. Gutted by the Americans, it has been rebuilt and is the landmark for many miles around; its silhouette majestic against the softly purple mountains of the south-west. The countryside around Miam—the village I visited—was golden with the ripened fields of millet and rice. There was singing in the fields, a co-operative had been recently established; its members were harvesting their first crops of peace.

Back in Pyongyang I was introduced to a group of Korean artists; they had asked me to tell them about art in Britain. They then told me about art in Korea. Of how, after liberation from Japanese occupation, plans were made to develop an art for the people. The war ended work on many ambitious projects and introduced a grim reality for artists, Some went to the front; others recorded the

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struggle. Artists who had been trained in Europe and who had sought to introduce abstract art became the most powerful of realists. Artists lived in dug-outs and huts; made their own brushes and inks. In summer they worked in the shade of a tree, in winter on the snow. Air-raids made work difficult, at times impossible, but art-exhibitions nevertheless took place, even in much-raided Pyongyang. The people took courage from an art which portrayed their life and their hopes. A new form emerged, that of mobile art-exhibitions which took place in the open air; in congested underground factories.

After seeing an exhibition of their work, several Korean artists apologised for not being able to show me the ancient collections of Korean Art. Whether the subject was too painful to discuss or out of respect for my feelings, I was only to learn later that there are literally no national art treasures left. With a barbarism reminiscent of the *Wehrmacht,* American forces systematically or wantonly destroyed the ancient cultural relics of the Korean people. They bombed and set fire to innumerable ancient temples, the old tombs with their priceless and irreplaceable frescoes, the pavilions and gate towers which were built many centuries ago. Precious monuments of a rich cultural heritage of an ancient people which often had no relation whatsoever to strategic objectives. Whether a building was protected under the Rules of War or not, made no difference.

But the devastation of this war of aggression, its utter and complete disregard for human life and cultural achievement found more than an equal in the tenacity, the courage and the strength of the Korean people. That the forces of peace in the long run, *are* stronger than the forces of war.

I will always remember this when I think of Korea.

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OLD CHINA

R. PAGE ARNOT

WHEN Francis Bacon, 'the real progenitor of English materialism', uttered his famous aphorism on the discoveries of printing, gunpowder and the magnet, saying that 'these three have changed the whole face and state of things throughout the world, the first in literature, the second in warfare, the third in navigation; whence have followed innumerable changes', he was completely unaware that these were Chinese in origin. Bacon may be excused his ignorance. But three hundred years later when the very learned J. B. Bury wrote on the same topic he failed to give due acknowledgement to the Chinese, a wilful ignorance that may not be excused. Even today, though it is common knowledge that paper, silk and porcelain came to Europe from China, it is not widely realised that a score of other techniques from metallurgical blowing-engines to the humble wheelbarrow were originally devised in China. The self-satisfied ignorance of Europeans in their high capitalist period (for example, the poet Tennyson's presumptuous line—'Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay') had its explanation in the predatory policies of the European powers. In 1912, a year after the fall of the Manchu dynasty (1644-1911), Lenin began an article with the words 'Progressive and civilised Europe takes no interest in the regeneration of China' and went on:

> How can Europe's indifference to this be explained? By the fact that everywhere in the West the rule of the imperialist bourgeoisie prevails, the rule of a bourgeoisie which is almost rotten to the core and ready to sell its entire 'civilisation' to any adventurer in return for 'strict' measures against the workers, or for an extra five kopeks' profit on the rouble. This bourgeoisie regards China *only* as booty.

Today, the situation is changed. The armed robbers, receivers and sneak thieves have been driven off. In the words of Mao Tse-tung, 'China has stood up'. The conference at Bandung, where the Chinese in their speeches imparted self-confidence to the delegates from states formerly victims of colonialism and now comprising more than half mankind, is a sign of the new era. Wilful ignorance can no longer subsist. There is now a thirst for knowledge of China. Delegations from all parts of Europe have been streaming to the Chinese People's Republic in these last five years: and information about it is eagerly sought alike by friend and foe.

This thirst for knowledge, though primarily for what is new in China, cannot be limited to that but must seek to understand the

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recent and the remoter past out of which the new China has come. Great historical questions are posed. How is it that the traditions of this ancient culture were continuous for thousands of years, while in West Asia and Europe the traditions were broken? How much was borrowed by Europe from China, and what little, up to the capitalist period, was available from Europe in exchange? How did the Chinese succeed 'in maintaining between the 3rd and the 13th centuries, a level of scientific knowledge unapproached in the West?' And, finally, what factors in Chinese civilisation prevented the growth of capitalism or inhibited the rise of modern science such as took place in Europe from the 16th century onwards?

To answer these and similar questions Dr. Needham has written his seven-volume book.* In his preface he says:

> It is obvious from the state of the subject, upon which the labours of twenty specialists working each for a lifetime would alone begin to make some impression, that a book such as the present one can be but a reconnaissance.

'Can be but a reconnaissance?' If so, it is due to European backwardness in such studies, which it is hoped will now be pursued by battalions of scholars following this lone scout. For though, as he tells us, a vast and scattered literature already exists in Chinese, Japanese and Western languages, as well as 'the veritable ocean of the extant original Chinese books themselves', Dr. Needham is the first to digest it into a single book framed to answer our questions. The book has the singular merit that it seeks the key to Chinese civilisation first of all in its productive forces. For unless these are known to us in their main aspects, the detail of the changing relations of production must remain obscure, and the superstructure be largely meaningless.

This merit of the book had little to build upon in the work of sinologists, with their literary tastes and training. For, 'few who have attained an acquaintance with the language have ever been possessed of scientific qualifications adequate to enable them to evaluate Chinese contributions'. Indeed, Dr. Needham in a notable passage of his preface lists the prerequisites for a writer on his subject:

> Thus (1) he should have had a scientific training and have been engaged for a number of years upon useful and productive scientific research; (2) he should be acquainted broadly with the history of science in Europe, and should have carried out some original work in one or other aspect of it; and (3) he should have had interest in, and some acquaintance with, the social and economic background of science and technology in the suc-

*_Science and Civilisation in China_, by Joseph Needham with the research assistance of Wang Ling. Vol. 1. pp. xxxviii, 318. 52s. 6d. Cambridge University Press.

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cessive stages of European history. But, on the other hand, (4) he should have had personal experience of Chinese life, and enjoyed the opportunity of extensive travels in that country, preferably neither as a missionary, a regular diplomat, nor a merchant; (5) he should have a knowledge of the Chinese language, if not adequate for very rapid reading, at least sufficient to permit the consultation of original sources and indispensable works of reference; and (6) he should have had the good fortune of guidance from a wide range of Chinese scientists and scholars. That these strangely assorted circumstances should all have fallen to my lot is my basic defence against the criticisms, which I shall certainly deserve, from those who are, in one field or another which this book will touch, past masters. It is also the reason why I have been prepared to sacrifice much in order to accomplish the survey proposed, fearing that it might well be some time before the same collocation of circumstances recurs in another person.

After his stimulating preface, with a full section of acknowledgements, the author sets forth the plan of the book as follows:

Vol. 1. Introductory Orientations.
Vol. 2. History of Scientific Thought.
Vol. 3. Mathematics and the Sciences of the Heavens and the Earth.
Vol. 4. Physics, Engineering and Technology (nautical, military, textile and paper).
Vol. 5. Chemistry and Industrial Chemistry (including pottery, porcelain, mining and metallurgy).
Vol. 6. Biology, Agriculture and Medicine.
Vol. 7. The Social Background.

At the end of the sixth volume 'we shall find ourselves face to face with a truly remarkable array of scientific initiatives, outstanding technical achievements, and speculative insights', and Dr. Needham puts the question to be answered in the seventh volume:

> Why, therefore, did *modern* science, the tradition of Galileo, Harvey, Vesalius, Gesner, Newton, universally verifiable and commanding universal rational assent—the tradition destined to form the theoretical basis of the unified world community—develop round the shores of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, and not in China or any other part of Asia?

This is the point at which argument will start: and we shall see whether the author, having given his readers in six volumes all the material for debate, will also carry their assent to his final answers.

Remembering how Engels wrote (in 1890) that 'our conception of history is above all a guide to study, not a lever for construction after the manner of the Hegelians. All history must be studied afresh, the conditions of existence of the different formations of society must be individually examined . . .' and a few months before his death raised the question 'Did feudalism ever correspond to its concept?', we can see how relevant is Dr. Needham's study. Formu-

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lations about three millenia of Eastern Asia, such as 'The passing over of Bronze Age Proto-feudalism into Feudal-bureaucratism, should not daunt anyone who recalls Marx's reply to a critic of 1877 who had tried 'to metamorphose my historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into a historico-philosophic theory of the general path imposed by fate upon every people, whatever the historic circumstances. . . .' Marx was sharp in his disclaimer, and insisted that his famous chapter in *Capital*

> does not pretend to do more than trace the path by which, in Western Europe, the capitalist order of economy emerged from the womb of the feudal order of economy.

This, after the seventh volume is published, should add zest to the debate.

Meanwhile in this first introductory volume there are given brief accounts of (*a*) the geographical background, (*b*) the history of China, (*c*) the special characteristics of the Chinese language,* and (*d*) the possible culture contacts from neolithic times to the end of the 15th century. The clarity of these sections is outstanding: and the treatment as a whole is masterly. Whoso reads it is thereby saved much rummaging in encyclopædias. This is due partly to the author's keen hunt for sources, making him a Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord like Poggio after the lost manuscripts of Greco-Roman antiquity. The book is not polemical in tone or purpose: but mystagogues like Toynbee yesterday or the Diffusionists of thirty years ago with their trail of Ivor Browns and Massinghams are gently deflated: for example, in a passage dealing with the 17th and early 18th century convictions that the Chinese were of Egyptian origin (and the subsequent bursting of this bubble), a footnote mentions a French book of 1774 in which 'where Chinese dragons and Egyptian crocodiles are concerned the partisans of Elliot-Smith are slain as if in a previous incarnation'.

The Chinese have a great tradition of historiography. But, says Needham:

> It is one of the greatest deficiencies of world scholarship that practically none of the Chinese histories has been translated into European languages.

European troops under Count von Waldersee during the Boxer Rising in 1901 in their looting of a Peking palace destroyed most of the Giant Encyclopædia, and effectively prevented any future translation. Meantime in this matter of the productive forces we can learn from Needham of the Chinese contributions to technique.

*'The old language, in spite of its ambiguity, has a concentrated, laconic, lapidary quality, making an impression of austere elegance, pith and virility, unequalled in any other invented instrument of human communication.' This estimate by Needham (page 41) confirms that of Henry Sweet, the outstanding philologist of fifty years ago.

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Compared with Mesopotamia, where bronze working began about five thousand years ago, the Chinese began much later, but once started (about 1500 B.C.) the Chinese bronze workers 'attained a technical perfection unknown elsewhere'. Similarly, though beginning from as late as 600 B.C., we shall find 'how rapidly the Chinese surpassed all other parts of the world in iron technology'.

Dr. Needham occasionally uses illuminating analogies but is always careful not to mislead the reader. For example, in telling us of the feudalism-smashing Han dynasties (202 B.C. to A.D. 220) there is this passage:

> There grew up a practice of having officials of the central government reside at the seats of hereditary vassal princes (rather like the 'residents' at rajah's courts in British Indian times).

To this he scrupulously adds the footnote: 'But, of course, they were not the agents of a foreign power.'

The volume is well illustrated; as well equipped as can be with references, bibliographies, index, and double footnotes (in Roman letters and in Chinese characters); typographically a credit to the Cambridge University Press: and, withal, a weight of scholarship carried lightly in an easy flowing narrative. The book is not dear, but expensive: nevertheless it is cheap at the price.

Dr. Needham, known for many years by his work in bio-chemistry and allied subjects, was head of the British Scientific Mission to China from 1942-46. The world movement for peace, and the labour movement in Britain owe him gratitude for his work as chairman of the scientific commission which established that bacteriological warfare had been tried out in China by the United States Army. By this new book he puts both Chinese and Europeans deeper in his debt.

CONTENTS OF PREVIOUS NUMBERS

APRIL: *H-Bomb, Labour and Communism*, R.P.D.; *Election Prospects*, D. N. Pritt, Q.C.; *Four-and-a-half-Percent*, Maurice Dobb; *From Bangkok to Bandung*, Ivor Montagu; *Now Isn't That Just Too Bad?* Andrew Rothstein; *Olive Schreiner*, Michael Harmel; BOOK REVIEWS: *Science in History* (J. D. Bernal, F.R.S.); *Marxism and the Irrationalists* (J. Lewis); *This Housing Problem* (A. Johnson); reviewed by B. Farrington, P. Fryer and J. Bent.

MAY: *Hydrogen Bomb Election*, R.P.D.; *The Tories' Home Record*, Wm. Lauchlan; *The Labour Party and the Election*, John Gollan; *The New Conservatism*, Sancho Panza; *Press Lords and Strikers*, Angela Tuckett; *Tsarism, Nationalism and Socialism*, Brian Pearce. OBITUARY: Albert Einstein. BOOK REVIEWS: *Dialectical Materialism, Vol. III, The Theory of Knowledge* (Maurice Cornforth); *Aristophanes: Two Plays* (Trans. D. Alastos); *Eastern Europe in the Socialist World* (Hewlett Johnson); *Monopoly* (S. Aaronovitch); *Letters from a Visitor to China* (Joan Robinson); reviewed by Clemens Dutt, Ewan MacColl, Stanley Evans, R.F., I.M.

JUNE: *Zero Hour Chance*, R.P.D.; *New Hope in Europe*, Quæstor; *At Bandung*, Chou En-lai; *Einstein's Place in History*, J. D. Bernal, F.R.S.; *Guatemala a Year Later*, A. B. Magil; *The Middle of the Road*, Sancho Panza; *Maxton and the I.L.P.*, William Gallacher. BOOK REVIEWS: *Return to Reality* (Rev. Stanley Evans and others); *A Gun is Unloaded* (Andre Stil); reviewed by M. Cornforth, Ted Dickens.

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Book Reviews

FISHER-FOLK

The Fisherman's Son, by Vilis Lacis. (580 pp. Russia Today Book Club. *3s.*)

THE Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, has just added an English translation of *The Fisherman's Son* by a leading Latvian novelist, Vilis Lacis, to the Library of Selected Soviet Literature. It well deserves this honour. Dealing with the life of a community of fisher-folk in a small village of the Western Dvina, it is nevertheless universal in its appeal since, as the author says, his concern throughout is 'to bring out what is typical in each situation and character'. Lacis wrote the book between 1932-34 when he was residing in this locality and earning his living as a docker in Riga. Such is the sheer veracity of the narrative that it is not surprising to learn that as soon as it appeared in print the prototypes of the characters were found in many a fishing village, and and a certain prominent fish-dealer, recognising himself in Garoza, the exploiter of the fisher-folk, actually tried to sue the author for libel. The characters are not only typical of pre-Soviet Latvia; identical men and women are to be found in every fishing community in capitalist countries. I recognised in many of them spit images of men and women I know personally in fishing towns on the East Coast of Scotland and in the Shetland and Faroe Islands. All sorts and conditions of people fill the volume and the entire life and work of the community is portrayed with wonderful authenticity. The book is not concerned with complicated neuroticisms, abnormalities or artificialities of any kind, but with the basic elements of ordinary life, and the simple, straightforward style is equal to all the demands of the subject-matter, whether in brilliantly etching in the austere Baltic landscape, reproducing the common joys and sorrows of village life with splendid sincerity and verve, or dealing with technical matters of seacraft, fish-trade practices, and the native culture and traditions of the people. In his foreword the author says, 'Plenty of faults and imperfections may be found in this book, and undoubtedly much has been left unsaid, but the author trusts his readers will bear in mind the fact that it was written under a reactionary bourgeois régime, when the slightest manifestation of progressive thought was ruthlessly hunted down, and one only dared to speak under one's breath.' He goes on to say that at the present time when the people of Latvia are building a free happy life as members of the great family of fraternal Soviet peoples, the life of the fishermen has also radically changed. That of which all the honest people in this book dreamed has become a reality, and exploiters and political climbers like some of the men portrayed here are no longer to be found on the Latvian coast. 'Fish curing plants and canneries are springing up everywhere, the fishing fleet gets bigger every day, the well-being of the fisher-folk like that of the whole population of the Soviet Republic is increasing yearly.' These great developments Lacis has narrated in a subsequent companion novel, *The Village on the Coast* (1953); but in *The Fisherman's Son* we see the long and arduous route that led to a comprehension of the true meaning of the political struggle, the shameless exploitation of the fruits of the fishermen's toil by middlemen, the difficulties encountered in getting the fishermen to unite on co-operative lines, and all the other superstitions, prejudices, and vested interests which

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delayed the advent of the Soviet order. The translation has been so well done that it reads as though the book had actually been written in English.

HUGH MACDIARMID

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Diary of a School Teacher, by F. Vigdorova. (344 pp. Russia Today Book Club. *3s. 6d.*)

THIS is the story of the everyday happenings in a class of 40 small boys of eleven in the two years immediately following the end of the war. It is the teacher's first post. She is very nervous when she begins, but as she gains the confidence of the boys, so her own confidence increases. The story tells of her successes and mistakes, how much she learns herself in the process of teaching and how great is her satisfaction in the work she has chosen. The boys are all individuals—the spoilt boy, the boy who clings to the hope that his father may still be alive, the boy whose work improves when he is praised. As Marina Nikolayevna gets to know their parents and their homes her task becomes easier. She shares the links the class makes with the world outside school, the correspondence with the sailor in the far north, the journalist who sends the boys stamps, their visits to the home for orphan children and the toys they make for them. With the increased purpose in their work, their standards improve. But by far the most impressive feature of the book is that the class becomes a collective unit which disciplines its members, sets its own targets, plans and carries out what it will do. It is the class with its Pioneer leader which helps the slow boy, the boy who needs a new cap and the boy in hospital. It is a wonderfully human story, very difficult to leave until the end. We see how very like our boys are those in IVC, how very similar are the problems. But for the solution of these problems, the book should be read by every teacher, every parent, everyone who has a hand in bringing up of children.

M. D. CLARKE

POLITICS AND PEOPLE

Moment of Choice, by Jack Lindsay. (336 pp. Bodley Head. *12s. 6d.*)

THIS novel follows *Betrayed Spring* and *Rising Tide*, and completes Jack Lindsay's trilogy about post-war Britain. It is set in Yorkshire, and covers the period between April, 1950, and April, 1951. The central characters are Kit Swinton, the son of a mill owner, and Jane Dacres, the daughter of a rival manufacturer, whom he marries. Both are self-divided and doubting characters. Jane, influenced by Jill Wethers, a

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working girl, and her own sister Margaret, both communists, joins the peace movement and finds conviction. In her turn, she convinces her husband, whom she has had to leave because of his attitude to her work for peace. Various kinds of people are presented to us: trade unionists, Labour Party, communists, and the contemporary equivalent of the bright young things. The working people, particularly the women, are lively and convincing. Memorable scenes are May Day, 1951, and the scrimmages with the police; the first meeting of a Peace group; and a street meeting on the Korean War.

DORIS LESSING

Shorter Notices

The Right to Live, by Ralph Millner. (30 pp. The Kenya Committee. *6d.*)

NOTABLY well written, clear and explicit, this pamphlet, in describing how the Kenya African people are exploited, oppressed, murdered, answers the questions: Are Africans backward? Are Europeans civilised? What do the people of Kenya want? How can the present tragic and brutal situation there be changed? It also examines the grave charge of Genocide (as interpreted by the United Nations Organisation) which the British government faces from leaders of the African people. A disciplined statement of a situation that cries aloud for understanding and action from the British Labour Movement.

Some Aspects of Indian Population, by V. B. Singh, Ph.D. (Balkrishna Book Co. Ltd., Lucknow. *Rs. 1.*)

A VALUABLE documented exposure of the current New Malthusianism which present 'over-population' theories as the cause of Indian poverty. Dr. Singh combats the reactionary arguments of the Indian Census Commission and Planning Commission in favour of family limitation. Laying bare the fallacies of their arguments, he shows the possibilities of an unprecedented increase in India's economic potential.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

INDO-CHINA — THE REVOLT SPREADS

So far from crushing the unrest in Indo-China, the tactics of French imperialism have only succeeded in fanning the flames of revolt, until a situation has been created which has many points of resemblance with both the Chinese and the Indian revolutionary movements. There is the same alliance between Nationalists and Communists which was a feature of the earlier stages of these movements and similar forms of struggle—*e.g.,* non-payment of taxes, civil disobedience, and other forms of passive resistance growing up alongside of the older methods of strikes and demonstrations. Further, the movement is not confined to one centre, but has spread right through the whole country, and outbreaks are reported in Tongking, Annam and Cochin China, distinct in origin, but all connected by the common purpose to free the country from the yoke of French imperialism.

From *The World of Labour,* July, 1930.

Published by the Proprietors, The Trinity Trust, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3, and printed by Wembley News, Wembley, Middlesex, Great Britain. Registered for transmission by Magazine Post to Canada, including Newfoundland.

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by the British administration, and dying in exile. His memory is still cherished by all Maltese progressives, writes our correspondent, adding: 'I am sure that one day he will be remembered as the Tom Paine of Malta and his martyrdom as symbolic of the fight for freedom, like that of the Tolpuddle victims'.

Mixing Thought With Enthusiasm

WHILE you can find L.M. in Peking, Canada or New Zealand, for readers in Britain it is quicker to put an order with the newsagent round the corner, or with the literature agent of your trade union branch! Or take out a subscription direct and make sure of having it on the dot each month. A remarkable job has been done by one London reader over the past three months. He approached a dozen newsagents in his area who had not previously taken it on order for regular customers, and got them to agree to display it. At the end of each month, he called again to see how sales were going, and to solve any problem of 'unsolds'. Our friend mixed thought with enthusiasm. He chose the newsagents carefully, not only with an eye to their type of customer, but also with the newsagent's own problems in mind. Some of the larger agents have to carry a wide range, and their stalls are 'so crowded that even with the best of intentions, only a corner of L.M. could be shown'. After three months' experience our friend draws the conclusion: 'The thing to do is to persevere, as we obviously have not reached a steady level yet.' He is not satisfied, but in fact his results are already splendid. Another first-class job was the reader who sold no less than 80 at his trade union annual conference recently. In that case there was a ready-made opportunity as well as keenness and forethought. Other circulation-builders, with more limited scope, must make their openings—or rather, recognise those which exist—as many already do, by using the L.M. Midget and Specimen Copy forms on the back cover. The slogan of those who are most pleased with their results seems to be 'What's good for me, is good for others'. Behind that lies a confidence in their neighbours—the British people at large. And that is no small thing; for it is the quality which brings the new to birth and digs the grave of all that is dying and rotten in the world.

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